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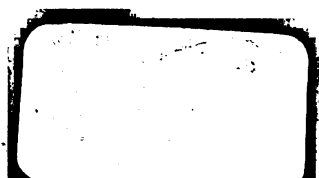
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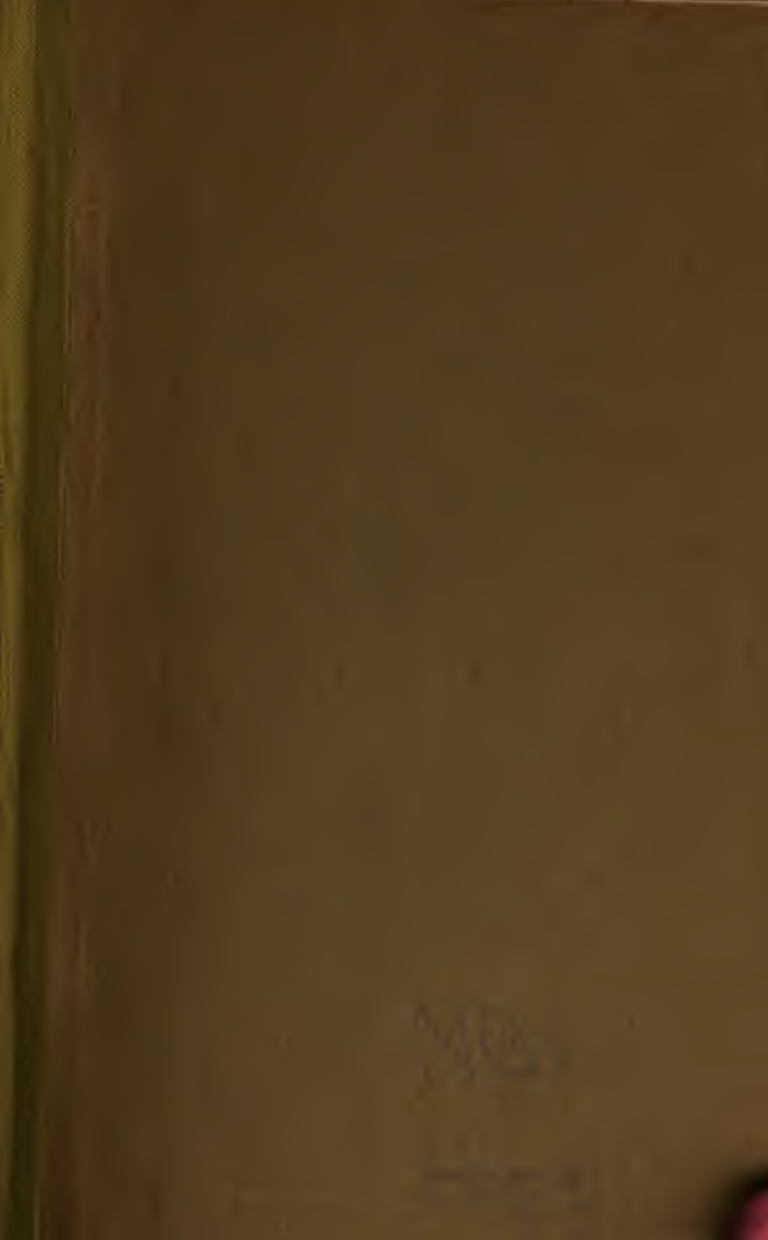
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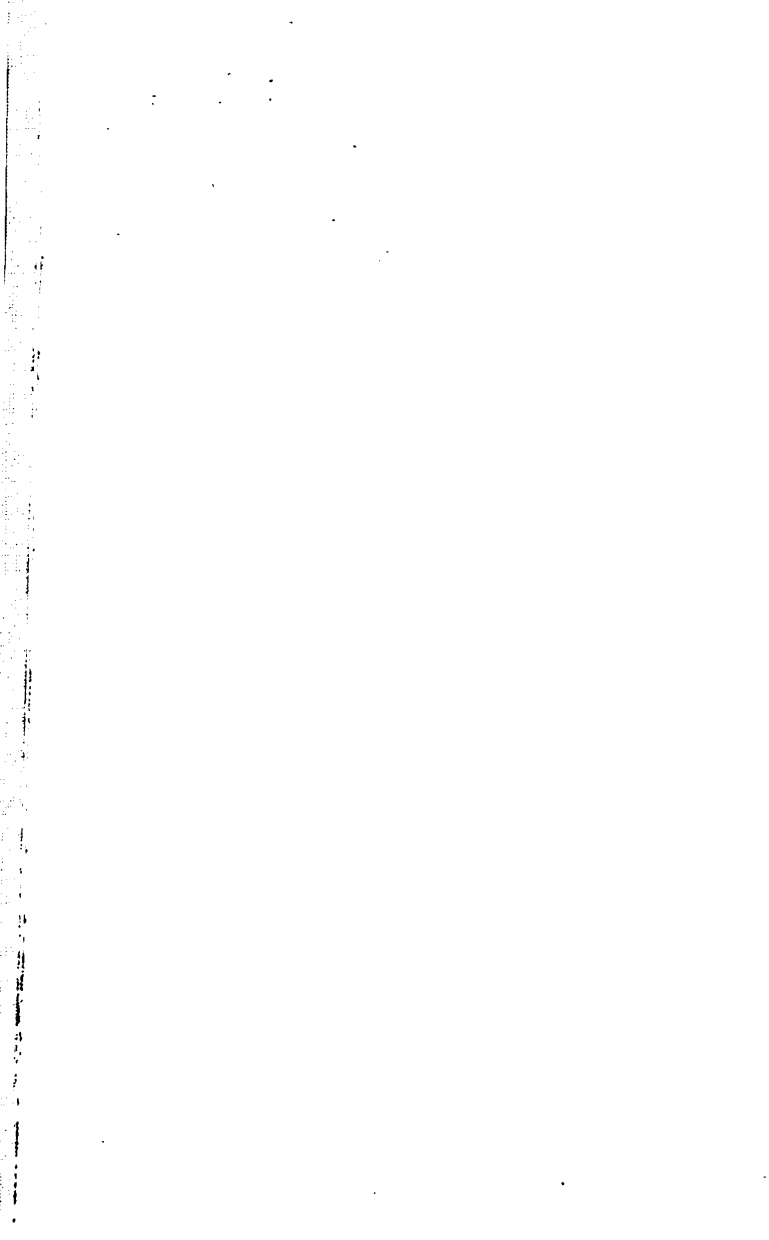
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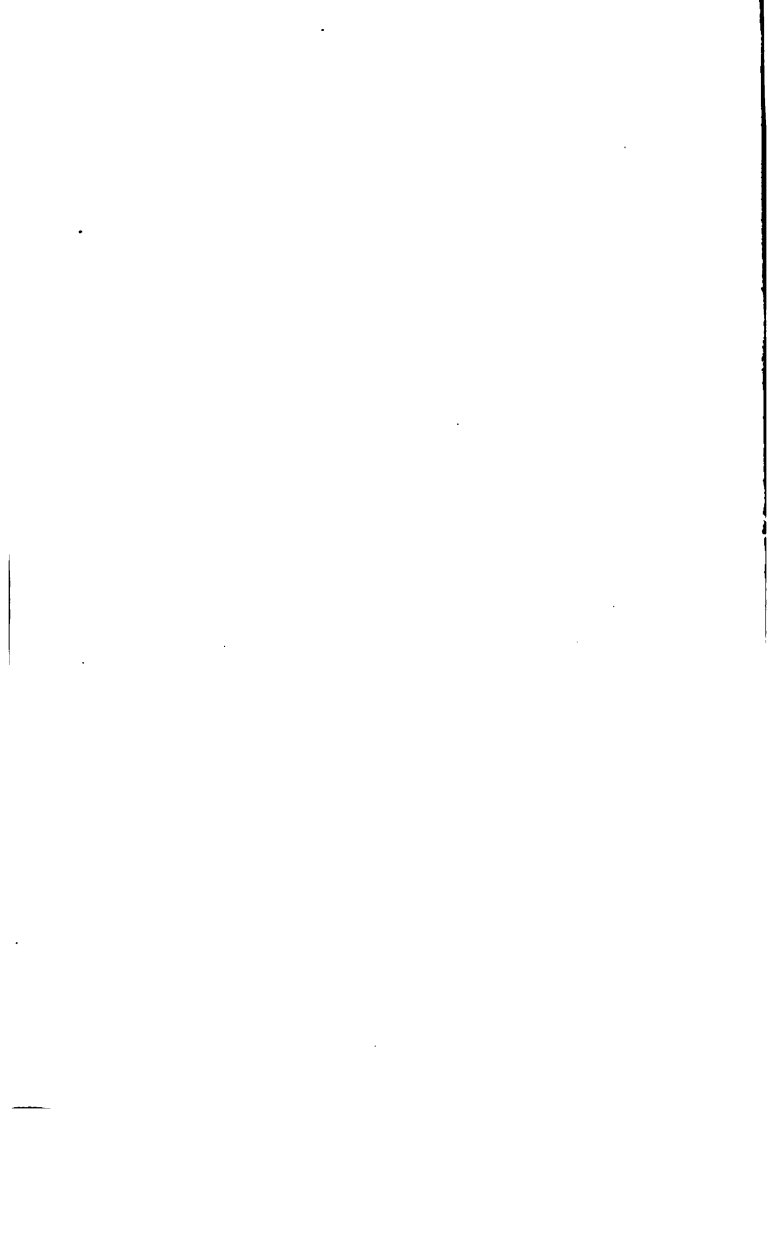
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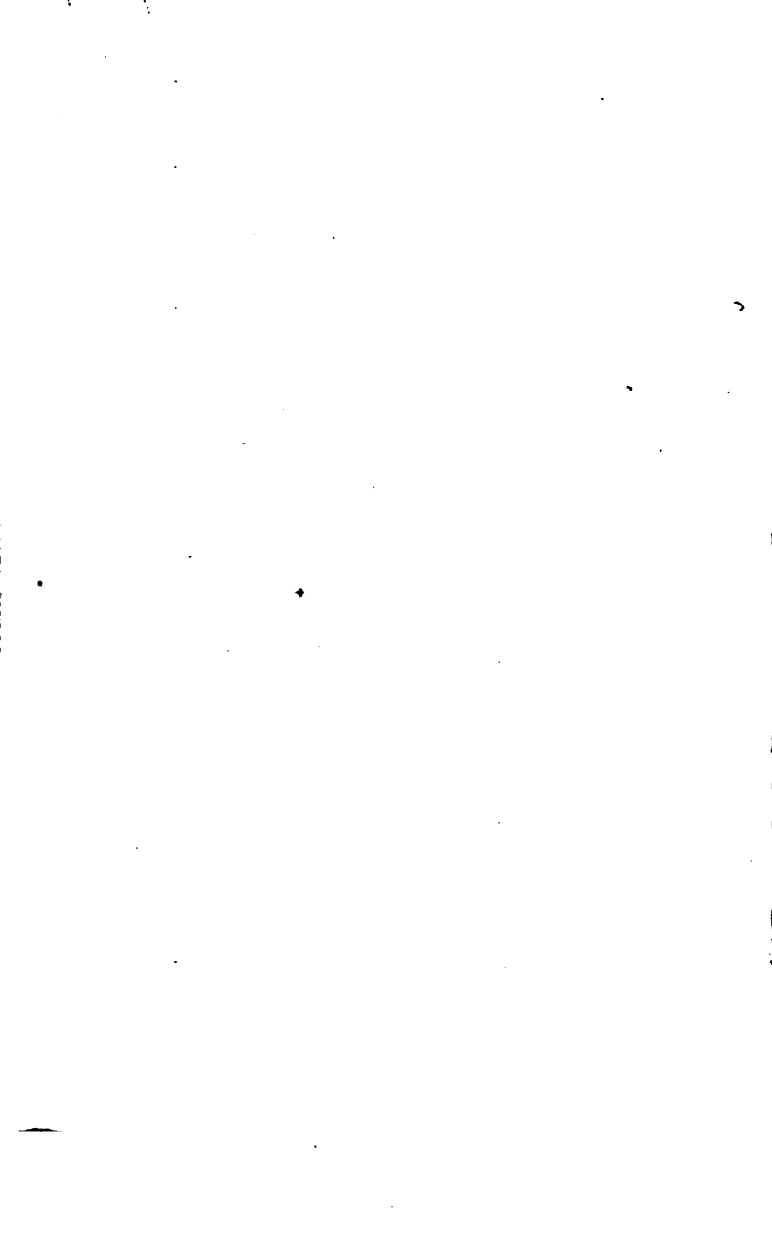








P o e m s .



A COLLECTION

OF

POEMS,

BY

James Barron Hope,

AUTHOR OF "LIONI DI MONOTA," &c. &c.

Author's Edition.

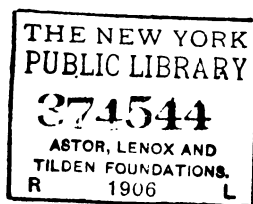
RICHMOND, VA.

PUBLISHED BY A. MORRIS.

M DCCC LIX.

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NEW YORK
PUBLISHED
BY A. MORRIS



Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1859, by

ADOLPHUS MORRIS,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United
States for the Eastern District of Virginia.

PRINTED BY C. H. WYNNE.

(ix)

Inscribed

TO

GEORGE BOOKER, Esq.

Of "Sherwood," Elizabeth City County, Virginia,
as a token of the esteem
of his Friend,

THE AUTHOR.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have ventured to dedicate this little book to you as a slight mark of my personal regard; but more especially because you embody in your own character the best attributes, traditionally associated with the people of Virginia. I am fully satisfied that the opinions contained in the chief performance—whatever you may think of its artistic merits—will meet your entire approbation; nay, more, that I have given utterance to the feelings of the State itself. With this consolatory reflection I submit my volume to the public, adorned, at least, by the immemorial sentiments of Virginia, and dignified by the sanction of your name.

Very faithfully, your friend and servant,

JAMES BARRON HOPE.

HAMPTON, Virginia, Nov. 20th, 1858.

GEORGE BOOKER, Esq., "Sherwood."

Received by Mr. B. H. H. H.

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A POEM
RECITED AT THE BASE OF
Crawford's Equestrian Statue
OF
WASHINGTON,
ON THE CAPITOL SQUARE,
IN
RICHMOND,

On the Twenty-Second of February, 1858.

"Sed ut vultus hominum, ita simulacra vultus imbecilla ac mortalia sunt; forma mentis æterna; quam terre et exprimere non per alienam materiam et artem, sed tuis ipse moribus possis. Quidquid ex Agricola amavimus, quidquid mirati sumus, manet mansurumque est in animis hominum, in æternitate temporum, fama rerum.—TACITUS.



P O E M .

Certain events, like architects, build up
Viewless cathedrals, in whose aisles the cup
Of some impressive sacrament is kist—
Where thankful nations taste the Eucharist,
Pressed to their lips by some heroic Past
Enthroned like Pontiff in the temple vast—
Where incense rises t'ward the dome sublime
From golden censers in the hands of Time—
Where through the smoke some sculptured saint
appears
Crowned with the glories of historic years;
Before whose shrine whole races tell their beads—
From whose pale front each sordid thought re-
cedes,

Gliding away like white and stealthy ghost,
As Memory rears its consecrated Host,
As blood and body of a sacred name
Make the last supper of some deathless fame.

This the event! Here springs the temple grand,
Whose mighty arches take in all the land!
Its twilight aisles stretch far away, and reach
'Mid lights and shadows which defy my speech:
And near its portal, which Morn opened wide—
Grey Janitor!—to let in all this tide
Of prayerful men, most solemnly there stands
One recollection, which, for pious hands,
Is ready, like the Minister's sculptured vase,
With holy water for each reverent face.
And mystic columns, which my fancy views,
Glow in a thousand soft, subduing hues,
Flung through stained windows of the Past in
gloom,
Of royal purple o'er our warrior's tomb.

And o'er his urn, seen through this painted
shade,

Suspended hangs the victor's mighty blade;
And up above his pale, majestic bust
Rests plumèd helm and corslet grim with rust;
And tattered banners rich in varied bars—
Emblazoned with the heraldry of Mars—
Darkly ensanguined, venerably dim,
Fit for the temple consecrate to him
Who won immortal glory, fadeless, great,
Not for himself, but for his native State—
Not for his State alone; the fame he won
Gilds all the nation like a radiant sun:
But still it is Virginia's proudest boast
That here it sheds its tropic splendors most.

Oh, proud old Commonwealth! Thy sacred name
Makes frequent music on the lips of Fame!
And as the nation, in its onward march,
Thunders beneath the Union's mighty arch,

Thine the bold front which every patriot sees,
The stateliest figure on its massive frieze.
Oh, proud old State! Well may thy form be grand,
'Twas thine to give a Saviour to the land.
For in the past, when upward rose the cry,
"Save, or we perish," thine 'twas to supply
The master-spirit of the storm whose will
Said to the billows in their wrath: "Be still!"
And though a great calm followed, yet the age
In which he saw that mad tornado rage
Made in its cares and wild tempestuous strife
One solemn Passion of his noble life.

This day, then, Countrymen, of all the year,
We well may claim to be without a peer:
Amid the rest—impalpable and vast—
It stands a Cheops looming through the past,
Close to the rushing, patriotic Nile
Which here o'erflows our hearts to make them
smile

With a rich harvest of devoted zeal,
Men of Virginia, for the Common-weal!

And to our Bethlehem, ye who come to-day—
Ye who compose this multitude's array—
Ye who are here from mighty Northern marts
With frankincense and myrrh within your hearts—
Ye who are here from the gigantic West,
The offspring nurtured at Virginia's breast,
Which in development by magic seems
Straight to embody all that Progress dreams—
Ye who are here from summer-wedded lands—
From Carolina's woods to Tampa's sands,
From Florida to Texas broad and free
Where spreads the prairie, like a dark, green
sea—

Ye whose bold fathers from Virginia went
In wilds to pitch brave enterprise's tent,
Spreading our faith and social system wide,
By which we stand peculiarly allied!—

Ye Southern men, whose work is but begun,
Whose course is on t'ward regions of the sun,
Whose brave battalions move to tropic sods
Solemn and certain as though marching gods
Were ordered in their circumstance and state
Beneath the banner of resistless Fate!—

Ye have been welcomed, Countrymen, by him *
Beside whose speech my rhetoric grows dim—
Whose thoughts are flint and steel—whose words
are flame,
For they all stir us like some hero's name:
But once again the Commonwealth extends
Her open hand in welcome to her friends;
Come ye from North, or South, or West, or
East,
No bull's head enters at Virginia's feast.

* Gov. WISE, whose noble welcome will never fade from the memory of those who heard it.

And ye who've journeyed hither from afar,
Know that fair Freedom's liquid morning star
Still sheds its glories in a thousand beams,
Gilding our forests, fountains, mountains, streams
With light as luminous as on that morn
When the Messiah of the land was born.

Then, as we here partake the mystic rites
To which his memory like a priest invites;
Kneeling beside the altars of this day,
Let every heart, subdued, one moment pray,
Each solemn throb a solemn separate prayer;
Let voiceless pleadings rise upon the air,
That He who lit our morning star's pure light
Will never blot it from the nation's sight;
That He will banish those portentous clouds
Which from so many its effulgence shrouds—
Which none will deem me Hamlet-mad when I
Say hang like banners on the darkened sky,

Suggesting perils in their warlike shape,
Which Heavenly Father grant that we escape !

Yes, let us ask the mighty God above,
Whose chiefest attribute is boundless love,
To furl those flags—bid all our discords cease,
Make Faction slumber, Party dream of peace.
Let us invoke His Spirit for those priests
Who pour out at their mocking Sabbath feasts
Mad streams of speech, which in tumultuous flood
Shock men and angels with their threats of blood ;
Who, 'mid the scenes which most man's bosom calm,
Preach Wrong and Murder after chanted psalm—
Who blend with anthem and with text sublime
Vindictive eulogies on servile crime.
Preaching revolt, and setting laws aside,
Forgetting God in Pharisaic pride.

Aye ! these smooth Calvins fain it seems would find
Some stake whereat—Servetus-like—to bind

Our vested rights ; but should they light the pyre,
Themselves will perish in the kindled fire.
Then let us pray, our Country proud and free
May never tread the hideous Calvary
To which such Pilates would the land condemn—
God of our Fathers, give the cross to them,
And save the nation as in prayer it stands
Raising to Thee its supplicating hands !

Christ, or Barabbas ? Faction, or the Laws ?
These are the questions which now give us pause :
He who gave blessings unto all may stand—
I speak with reverence—type of this fair land,
While the fierce robber fitting image makes
For the mad spirit which God's livery takes.
Then, do I err, my Countrymen, to-day,
When 'neath heaven's canopy to you I say :
Barabbas-faction nailed up by the hands
Which dare assail the Constitution's bands
Were justly punished ?

But whate'er betide

Be it released, or be it crucified,
Thus much, at least, brave Old Virginia vows
No crown of thorns shall desecrate her brows.

Why touch upon these topics, do you ask?
Why blend these themes with my allotted task?
My answer's brief, 'tis, citizens, because
I see fierce warfare made upon the Laws.
A people's poets are that people's seers,
The prophet's faculty, in part, is theirs,
And thus 'tis fit that from this Statue's base,
Beneath great WASHINGTON'S majestic face,
That I should point the dangers which menace
Our social temple's symmetry and grace.

Alas, my Countrymen! these earthquake shocks
Come from a Samson, who, with unshorn locks
And sightless eyeballs, and a mind insane,
Strains madly at the pillars of the fane

Which was built up by men whose large hearts
knew

No point of compass in their general view.
Should it down topple 'neath his frantic hands
The solemn wrecks will rest upon time's sands,
Gloomy and wondrous in their vast remains,
Like shattered fragments on Egyptian plains,
And nations in their caravans will pause
To mark the ruin and lament its cause.

When o'er our Compact such wild wreck impends,
Virginia's brow in god-like anger bends.
In its defence she lays her hand on hilt—
To win that Charter her best blood was spilt—
And to preserve its guarantees her heart
Will cease to throb ere one right shall depart.

Yet, some have told us that her sword blade's
reach

Is far too short: Methinks the old Greek's speech,

That one bold step can make the shortest long
And Freedom's cause the very frailest strong,
Has never been forgotten by the race
Who see a father's in this hero's face.
To such as these, I say, our motto gleams
Upon us even in our prayerful dreams;
Yes, its "*sic semper*" in each bosom burns,
Bids us be free, or seek our funeral urns;
Bids us be free, though many a loyal blow
Should first be struck to lay a tyrant low.
And thinking proudly on ancestral deeds,
Could we not, Brothers, all prove Winkelreids,*
Each bosom ready for its sheaf of spears,
Like his of old who led his mountaineers,
When down went Austria's proud Archducal crest
To pave the road he opened with his breast?

* Under the sanction of poetic license I have, as will be seen, ventured upon a slight liberty with the pronunciation of the great Swiss soldier's name.

In Freedom's cause who'd ask for higher bliss
Than thus to die, as died the noble Swiss?
Could we feel otherwise, when from yon form,
Which shall defy whole centuries of storm,
Our Father's virtues looking down inspire †
The coldest hearts with some heroic fire?

But here I pause, for happier omens look,
And playing Flamen turn to Nature's book:
Where late rich Autumn sat on golden throne,
A stern usurper makes the crown his own;
The courtier woodlands, robbed of all their state,
Stripped of their pomp, look grim and desolate;
Reluctant conscripts, clad in icy mail,
Their captive pleadings rise on every gale.
Now mighty oaks stand like bereavèd Lears;
Pennons are furled on all the sedgy spears

† The paraphrase here will readily be recognized.

Where the sad river glides between its banks,
Like beaten general twixt his pompless ranks;
And the earth's bosom, clad in armor now,
Bids stern defiance to the iron plough,
While o'er the fields so desolate and damp
Invading Winter spreads his hostile camp,
And, as he shakes his helmet's snowy plume,
The landscape saddens into deeper gloom.
But yet ere many moons have flung to lea,
To begging billows of the hungry sea,
Their generous gold—like Oriental Queens—
A change will pass o'er all these wintry scenes:
There'll come the coronation of glad Spring,
Grandeur than any made for bride of king—
The heav'ns will glow, the dawns be rich with red—
The greenest verdure for her feet be spread—
Earth's hoddens-grey will change to livelier hues
Enriched with pearl drops of the limpid dews;
Plenty will stand with her large tranquil eyes
To see her treasures o'er the landscape rise.

Thus may the lover of his Country hope
To see again the Nation's spring-tide ope
And Freedom's harvest turn to ripened gold,
So that our world may give unto the old
Of its great opulence, as Joseph gave
Bread to his brothers when they came to crave.

But from his name, I've paused too long, you
think?

Yet he who stands beside Niag'ra's brink
Breaketh not forth at once of its grand strife;
'Tis thus I stand subdued by his great life—
His life, Niag'ra-like, which sent its spray
Up to the heavens upon that tearful day
When earth in lamentation raised its voice
At what made thronèd Seraphim rejoice.
And with his name a host of others rise,
Climbing, like planets, Fame's eternal skies:
Great names, my Brothers! with such deeds allied,
That all Virginians glow with filial pride—

That here the multitude shall daily pace
Around this statue's hero-circled base,
Thinking on those who, though long sunk in sleep,
Still round our camp the guard of sentries keep—
Who, when a foe encroaches on our line,
Prompt the stern challenge for the countersign—
Who with proud memories feed our bright watch-
fire,

Which ne'er has faded, never will expire—
Grand benedictions, they in bronze will stand
To guard and consecrate our native land!
Great names are theirs! But his, like battle song,
In quicker current sends our blood along;
For at its music hearts throb quick and large,
Like those of horsemen thundering in the charge!
God's own Knight-Errant! There his figure stands!
Our soul's are full—our bonnets in our hands!

When the fierce torrent—lava-like—of bronze
To mould this statue burst its furnace bonds—

When it out-thundered in its liquid flow,
 With splendid flame and scintillating glow,
 'Twas in its wild, tumultuous throb and storm
 Type of the age which moulded into form
 The god-like character of him sublime,
 Whose name is reared a statue for all time
 In the great minster of the whole world's heart,
 For every clime and people claim a part
 Of his great opulence of mind and soul,
 From slumb'rous tropics to the frozen pole.

I've called his name a statue. Stern and vast
 It rests enthroned upon the mighty past:
 Fit plinth for him whose image in the mind
 Looms up as that of one by God designed!
 Fit plinth, in sooth! the mighty past for him
 Whose simple name is Glory's synonyme!
 E'en Fancy's self, in her enchanted sleep,
 Can dream no future which may cease to keep
 His name in guard, like sentinel, and cry,
 From Time's great bastions: "It shall never die!"

Kingdoms may perish—that will still remain :
To it the ages will but be as rain,
Which falls and mingles in the ocean wide,
Each drop but adding to its mighty tide.

His simple name a statue? Yes, and grand
'Tis reared in this and every other land.
Around its base a group more noble stands
Than e'er was carved by human sculptor's hands,
E'en though each form, like that of old, should
flush

With vivid beauty's animating blush—
Though dusky bronze or pallid stone should thrill
With sudden life at some Pygmalion's will—
For these great figures, with his own enshrined,
Are seen, my countrymen, by men, though blind.

There VALOR fronts us, with her storied shield,
Brave in devices won on many a field :
A splendid wreath snatched from the carnage grim
Is twined around that buckler's burnished rim,

And as we gaze the brazen trumpet's blare
With shrill vibration shakes the frighten'd air—
The roll of musketry—the clash of steel—
The clang of hoofs as charging squadrons wheel—
The hoarse command—the imprecative cry—
Swell loud and long, while Fancy's eager eye
Sees the stern van move on with crimson strides
Where Freedom's Warrior on his war-horse rides—
Sees the great cannons flash out red and fast
Through battle mists which canopy the past.

And solemn fronted TRUTH, with earnest eyes,
Stands there serenely beautiful and wise :
Her stately form, in undisturbed repose,
Rests by her well, where limpid crystal flows,
While on her face, which can severely frown,
A smile is breaking as she gazes down ;
For clearly marked upon that tranquil wave
Slumbers his image in a picture brave,
And leaning on the fountain's coping stone,
She scarce can tell his shadow from her own.

And WISDOM, with her meditative gaze,
Beside its base her mighty chart displays;
There with her solemn and impressive hand
Writes as she stoops—as Christ wrote on the
sand—

But what she traces all may read—'tis this:
An invocation by our dreams of bliss—
By hopes to do, and by our great deeds done,
The war of sections through all time to shun—
She writes the words, which almost seem divine,
“Our deadliest foe's a geographic line!”

And JUSTICE, with her face severely grand,
Stands 'mid the group, her balances in hand:
Faultless in judging trivial deeds, or great,
Unmoved by love, and unimpressed by hate.
Beside her gleams, undimmed by spot or rust,
A mighty blade to strike when strike she must;
And this bright falchion, like that which defends
The guarded gate where earth in Eden ends,

With flame terrific and with ponderous sway
Frightens each BRENNUS from her scales away.

And there we see pale, pleading MERCY bow,
A troubled shadow on her saintly brow;
Her fringed lashes tremulous with tears,
Which glitter still through all the change of years:
And as we see those tear-drops slowly rise,
Giving new softness to her tender eyes,
Away the mists which o'er the dark past drift
Are rent and scattered, while the sudden rift
Shows, like some distant headland vast and dim
Seen through the tempest, the great soul of him
Who, guarding 'gainst the native traitor, could
Turn from her pleadings, for his country's good.

And HONOR last completes the stately group,
With eye like eagle's in descending swoop,
Fronted like goddess beautiful and proud
When sailing on the "lazy-pacing cloud:"

Prouder her port than that of all the rest,
With radiant forehead and translucent breast,
She needs no gesture of supreme command
For us to know her foremost of the band:
They were his counsellors, she as the mind
By which their promptings were in deeds combined—

In deeds which Fame, like fasces, bears before
The noblest consul that earth ever bore.

In the Westminster of the mind, which here
Rises around in majesty severe—
A temple built up, but unmade by hands,
Grander than any reared in other lands—
A mighty temple which no words can paint,
Where in the midst uprises yonder saint—
Beneath its dome, beside his form, I see
This group: God's cast for all futurity.
And 'neath these arches, wonderful and dim,
Floats peal on peal a superhuman hymn,

Which, trembling, vibrates through our minds and
hearts,

Till humbled Faction from the scene departs:
And hands grasped full of ostracising shells
Sink by our sides as that grand anthem swells.
That wondrous symphony, which stills all strife
From the snapt silver chord of his great life,
Sweeps round us with vibration, like the tone
Of breaking harp-string near God's jasper throne.

And when the sun to-morrow lights the sky,
My countrymen, shall these emotions die?
Shall hearts which burn with patriotic fire
Grow cold again? Shall its proud flame expire
And leave but ashes and decaying brands,
Like casual flame enkindled on the sands
By mariners who seek a fated deck—
Fated to meet the tempest and the wreck?

Why are we here? It were a bitter shame
To pay this homage to a hero's name,

And yet forget the principles which gave
His true defiance to oblivion's wave!
Aye! Sirs, remember, when the day is spent,
In Freedom's camp our soldier pitched his tent!
Maintain your own—respect your brother's right—
Thus will you praise Jehovah's belted Knight.

Are we Pompeians gathered here to-day,
Gazing upon our last superb display?
Crowning the hours with many a festal wreath,
While red Vesuvius bubbles underneath?
Oh! no, my Countrymen! This cloud must be
The smoke of incense floating o'er the free!
No lava-flood can ere o'erwhelm this land,
Held, as 'tis holden, in God's mighty hand.

And when the garlands of to-day are pale,
Shall clang of armorers riveting our mail
Rise in harsh dissonance where now the song
In surging music sweeps the land along?

No, Brothers, no ! The Providence on high
Stretches above us like the arching sky ;
As o'er the world that broad empyrean field,
So o'er the nation God's protecting shield !

Do they not tell us that His hand is seen
In all that is—in all that yet hath been ?
The falling sparrow, and the shooting light
Which, blazing, hurries o'er the vault of night,
With such strange splendors that we wonder how
The gem was shaken from some angel's brow.—
The falling sparrow and the bursting star,
One at our feet, the other gone afar,
Each follows some decree of His—some law
Which in dead bird or shooting light we saw.

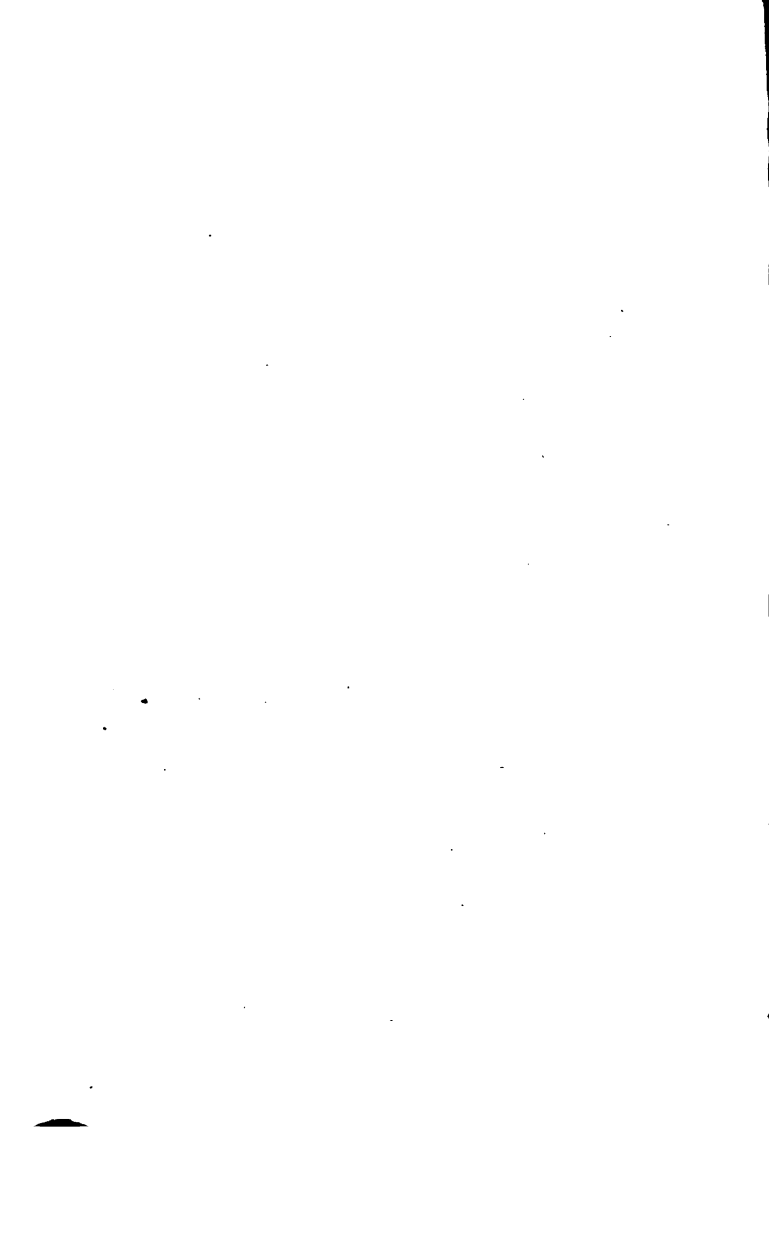
His the great will which sways the tides of earth—
His the great will which giveth empires birth—
And this grand truth through every age and clime
Is written out in characters sublime ;

But most we see the traces of His hand
In the great Epic of our native land.

This New World had its Adam, and he fled—
God's was the voice and God's the mighty tread
Which scared the red man from his Eden bow-
ers—

God's the decree which made the Garden ours!
An Eden 'twas and such it still remains:
Oh, Brothers! shall we prove a race of Cains?
Shall impious hands be armed with deadly things,
Because we bring up different offerings
Unto our altars? To the nation's shrine
I take my gift; my Brother, take thou thine!
Again I ask: While this proud bronze remains,
Shall this great people prove a race of Cains?
Here make your answer at this statue's base,
Beneath this warrior's calm, majestic face;
And here remember that your best applause
To him is shown in standing by the Laws!

But if our rights shall ever be denied,
I call upon you, by your race's pride,
To seek some "West-Augusta," and unfurl
Our banner where the mountain vapors curl;
Lowland and valley then will swell the cry,
He left us free: thus will we live, or—die!
One other word. Virginia, hear thy son,
Whose filial service now is nearly done—
Hear me, Old State! Thou art supremely blest:
A hero's ashes slumber in thy breast!
O Mother! if the ashes of a king
Could nerve to deeds with which Fame's trumpets
ring,
What glove of challenger shall make thee start,
When thy great son lies sleeping on thy heart!



A POEM

RECITED ON THE

Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary

OF

THE ENGLISH SETTLEMENT

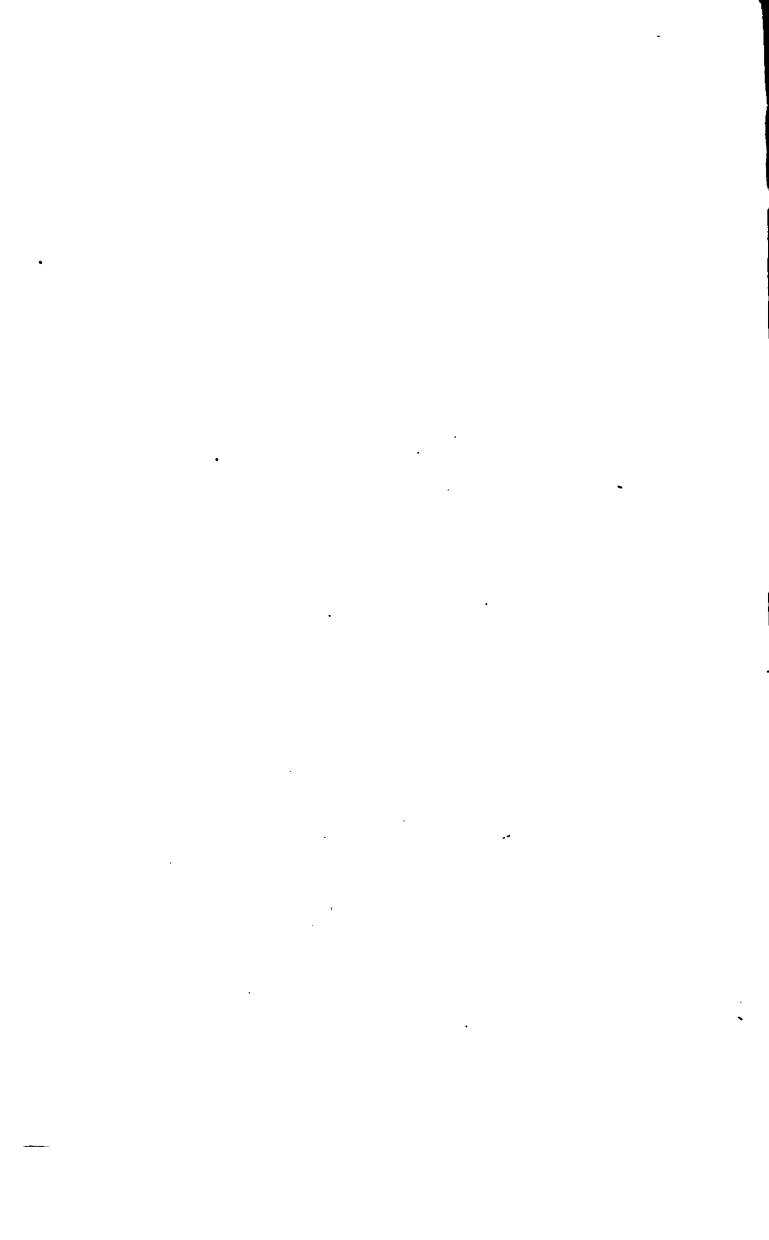
AT

JAMESTOWN,

May 13th, 1857.

I walk these ancient haunts with reverent tread
And seem to gaze upon the mighty dead;
Imagination calls a noble train
From dust and darkness back to life again.

VIRGINIA: a Poem by J. R. THOMPSON.



P O E M .

Down the steep, misty crags of antique time
Leaps many a torrent in a surge sublime,
Pouring along its mystic flood, till, pale
And dim, it bursts in some sequestered vale,
Some valley of the Past, lone and remote,
Where myths and legends fancifully float
In mists through which Tradition and Romance,
ASTARTE-twins, above the torrent glance;
Where splendid hues illumine each rugged fact
Which, rock-like, bounds the rushing cataract;
Where purple shadow o'er each scene descends
And Poesie her soft enchantment lends;
Where vanished things—the very simplest—glow
With a strange beauty, which doth float and flow

Around them, in such rich and gorgeous dyes
As Autumn sunsets mingle in our skies.
Our hist'ry, Brothers, such grand torrent makes ;
This spot, the valley where in spray it breaks,
Which, wreathed in columns or dispersed in dews,
Takes from the Past its variegated hues.
And here we meet, this sacred day apart,
To muse in solemnness of mind and heart,
While over us, like banner, floats the mist,
By fair Romance and bright Tradition kist.
And, through these mists, what epic scenes arise !
What storied pictures start before our eyes !
What grand, historic forms, superb and vast,
Loom through the vapors gathered o'er the past !
While high above is seen God's awful hand
Writing, my Brothers, slowly out, His grand,
Sublime decree, which the great Genoese
Transcribed of old upon the mighty seas—
Transcribed with those three keels which long ago
Fretted the billows into wakes of snow,

While through sad days, and nights devoid of sleep,
He ploughed the bosom of the azure deep.

The keels which sailed upon that sultry morn—
When priestly chaunt and deep sonorous horn
Broke on the summer air; when, all agape,
The speculative throng saw them escape
Their moorings in the tranquil, sunny bay—
Those *caravellas*—went upon God's way.
And though ten thousand storms have swept the deep
And calms have lulled it in delusive sleep—
Though, for long ages, it has tossed and yearned,
As starlight shone, or crimson sunset burned—
Still on the ocean—type though it may be
Of all that's boundless, unsubdued and free—
Remains the record to all time unfurled,
How God gave man, the second time, a world.

One Heaven-directed genius laid his hand
Upon the hilt of Providence; the brand

Required the force of all the human race
To draw it from its scabbard's resting place—
Ages to wield it in the noble van
Which gave this Western Hemisphere to man.
Fain would I linger on that splendid age,
To which he gave its very brightest page;
Fain sing his god-like majesty of mind,
Which looked right onward—never glanced behind,

While, 'neath his brow, lit with the glow of hope,
It, toiling, cast the whole world's horoscope.
Fain would I paint his griefs in those sad hours,
When all his hopes seemed like the last year's
flowers;

Fain follow him through all his dreary years
Of pain, and poverty, and bitter tears;
From convent porch to regal palace gate,
Tracing his footsteps as he charged on Fate,
Which built new ramparts in his path each day
Until his brow was knit—his dark locks grey.

Fain would I pause at Palos, when the breeze
His *caravellas* swept toward unknown seas;
Fain follow where his daring vessels sped,
Strange tides beneath—strange planets overhead;
Fain would I dwell upon that happy day,
When, on the new-found shore, he knelt to pray:
That Easter-day, when, with the great sea's boom,
Making the music of his mass, the tomb
Gave up his dream, which now in beauty rose,
Like CHRIST awakened after His repose.
Was this the thought! CHRIST'S was the name
 he gave
To that fair island smiling on the wave.

And the poor Indian! would I might narrate
His piteous story and his tragic fate!
A great mind tells us, that on all earth's sods,
Men crucify, and then adore, their gods;
There 'twas reversed—in blood the land was dyed,
And deities their vot'ries crucified.

Had I the space, I well might pause to scan
The varied fortunes of this wondrous man;
Might follow through those ever sunny isles,
Where Nature wears her very sweetest smiles;
Decked in a crown of ever-blooming flowers,
Of richer hues and sweeter far than ours;
Where purple twilights tint the evening seas,
And calm stars write their solemn mysteries
In skies which seem to be the azure shield,
Where GOD'S own arms are blazoned on the
field—

Where strand and ocean—earth and star-lit sky,
With one accord, give "Atheos" the lie.

But to be brief: for images apace
Crowd on my fancy, claiming each a place,
As stars claim places in a tranquil night—
So thick they come—but not, alas! so bright;
In brief, then, Brothers, to my humble song
I've made the prelude ample thus and long,

As some musician, who distrusts his art
Will hum a bar before he takes his part.
But not alone for this have I delayed;
For other purpose, too, my fingers strayed
Along the harp-strings, as 'twere in a dream—
My purpose was to weave into my theme
These humble praises of the brain profound
Which, wrapped in slumber, all its era found;
Yet woke the age from its long, fevered sleep—
Roused by the voices of the mighty deep.
And though Spain's Admiral slumbered in the
grave,

He left a beacon blazing o'er the wave,
And, as years sped, the light he left waxed great—
The light he'd stricken from the flint of Fate—
Rousing all Europe, as that flame antique
Awoke to triumph the exultant Greek.

At last the visions, vast and undefined,
Which long had mustered in the general mind,

Marched forth in actions ; and the age's crest
Flickered with fires enkindled in the West,
A splendid plume ! which flamed and flamed and
flowed,

As, lance in rest, the era westward rode.

What dreams men dreamt beneath the general
spell—

What visions saw—I need not pause to tell.

Nor how the tide of human fate was rolled

Upon its course by love of fame or gold,

Nor how that flood was stained in this fair clime,

By blood and tears—rapacity and crime.

I pause not now to speak of RALEIGH's schemes,
Tho' they might give a loftier bard fit themes ;

I pause not now to tell of Ocracock,

Where Saxon spray broke on the red-brown
rock ;

Nor of my native river, which glides down

Through scenes where rose a happy Indian town ;

But, leaving these and Chesapeake's broad bay,
Resume my story in the month of May,
When England's cross—SAINT GEORGE'S ensign
flowed

Where ne'er before emblazoned banner glowed—
When English hearts throbbed fast, as English
eyes

Looked o'er the waters with a glad surprise—
Looked gladly out upon the varied scene,
Where stretched the woods in all their pomp of
green ;

Flinging great shadows—beautiful and vast,
As e'er upon Arcadian lake were cast.
Turn where they would—in what direction rove,
They found some bay, or wild, romantic cove,
On which they coasted through those forests
dim,

Wherein they heard the never ceasing hymn
That swelled from all the tall, majestic pines—
Fit choristers of Nature's sylvan shrines !

For, though no Priest their solitudes had trod,
The trees were vocal in their praise of God,
Wailing grand passages and bars sublime,
To which Religion in their hearts beat time.
And, then, when capes and jutting headlands past,
The sails were furled against each idle mast,
They saw the sunset in its pomp descend
And sky and water gloriously contend
In gorgeousness of colors, red and gold,
And tints of amethyst together rolled,
Making a scene of splendor and of rest
As vanquished day lit camp-fires in the West.
And when the light grew faint on wave and strand,
New beauties woke in this enchanting land;
For, through heav'n's lattice-work of crimson bars,
Like angels, looked the bright, eternal stars.
And then, when gathered tints of purplish brown,
A golden sickle, reaping darkness down,
The new moon shone above the giant trees
Which made low music in the evening breeze;

The breeze which floating blandly from the shore,
The perfumed breath of flow'ring jasmine bore;
For smiling Spring had kist its clust'ring vines
And breathed her fragrance on the lofty pines.

In those vast forests dwelt a race of kings,
Free as the eagle when he spreads his wings—
His wings which never in their wild flight lag—
In mists which fly the fierce tornado's flag;
Their flight the eagle's! and their name, alas!
The eagle's shadow swooping o'er the grass,
Or, as it fades, it well may seem to be
The shade of tempest driven o'er the sea.

Fierce, too, this race, as mountain torrent wild,
With haughty hearts, where Mercy rarely smiled—
All their traditions—histories imbued
With tales of war and sanguinary feud,
Yet though they never couched the knightly lance,
The glowing songs of Europe's old romance

Can find their parallels amid the race
Which, on this spot, met England face to face.
And when they met the white man, hand to
hand,

Twilight and sunrise stood upon the strand—
Twilight and sunrise? Saxon sunshine gleams
To-day o'er prairies, and those distant streams,
Which hurry onward through far Western plains,
Where the last Indian, for a season, reigns.

Here, the red CANUTE, on this spot, sat down,
His splendid forehead stormy with a frown,
To quell, with the wild lightning of his glance,
The swift encroachment of the wave's advance;
To meet and check the ruthless tide which rose,
Crest after crest of energetic foes,
While high and strong poured on each cruel wave,
Until they left his royalty—a grave;
But, o'er this wild, tumultuous deluge glows
A vision fair as heaven to saint e'er shows;

A dove of mercy o'er the billows dark
Fluttered awhile, then fled within God's ark.
Had I the power, I'd reverently describe
That peerless maid—the "pearl of all (her) tribe,"
As evening fair, when coming night and day
Contend together which shall wield its sway.
But, here, abashed, my paltry fancy stays;
For her, too humble its most stately lays.
A shade of twilight's softest, sweetest gloom—
The dusk of morning—found a splendid tomb
In England's glare; so strange, so vast, so bright,
The dusk of morning bursted into light,
Which falleth through the Past's cathedral aisles,
Till sculptured Mercy like a seraph smiles.
And though Fame's grand and consecrated fane
No kingly statue may, in time, retain,
Her name shall linger, nor with age grow faint;
Its simple sound—the image of a Saint!

Sad is the story of that maiden's race,
Long driven from each legendary place.

All their expansive hunting-grounds are now
Torn by the iron of the Saxon's plough,
Which turns up skulls and arrow-heads and
bones—

Their places nameless and unmarked by stones.
Now freighted vessels toil along the view,
Where once was seen the Indian's bark canoe;
And to the woods the shrill escaping steam
Proclaims our triumph in discordant scream.
Where rose the wigwam in its sylvan shade,
Where the bold hunter in his freedom strayed,
And met his foe or chased the bounding stag,
The lazy horses at the harrow lag.
Where the rude dance was held or war-song
rose,

The scene is one of plenty and repose.
The quiver of her race is empty now,
Its bow lies broken underneath the plough;
And where the wheat-fields ripple in the gale,
The vanished hunter scarcely leaves a trail.

'Twas where yon river musically flows,
The European's nomenclature rose;
A keen-edged axe, which since, alas! has swept
Away their names—those boughs, which blossoms
 kept,
Leaving so few, that when their story's drowned,
'Twill sink, alas! with no fair garland crowned.
What strange vicissitudes and perils fell
On the first settlers, 'tis not mine to tell;
I scarce may pause to syllable the name
Which the great Captain left behind to fame;
A name which echoes through the tented past
Like sound of charge rung in a bugle's blast.
His age, although it still put faith in stars,
No longer glanced through feudal helmets' bars,
But stood in its half armor; thus stands he
An image half of Border chivalry,
And half presented to our eager eyes,
The brilliant type of modern enterprise.
A knightly blade, without one spot of rust,
Undimmed by time and undefaced by dust,

His name hangs up in that past age's hall,
Where many hang, the brightest of them all.

And here, at last, there rose the rambling town,
A smile contending with the forest's frown,
And busy sounds were borne upon the breeze,
The swarming hum of England's settling bees.
Would I might linger on those ancient times,
Whose stories swell with yet unwritten rhymes;
Would I might paint the dames and cavaliers,
Whose stately forms glide down the vanished
years,

Where faintly, through the dusky purple shade,
Gleam jewelled hilt and golden wrought bro-
cade;

Whence, with a sweet and necromantic spell,
Music and laughter, song and perfume swell.
Would I might pause 'neath yonder tower, which
now

No longer hears response or fervid vow;

Which only echoes to the plaintive hymn
Made by the night wind, when the stars are
dim.

Where prayers for Kings and Parliaments arose,
Waves the wild vine and the white clover blows.
There Solitude—that grave and solemn priest—
For meditation spreads its sacred feast;
And standing grey in sunshine and in blast,
It seems embodied “Amen” o’er the past;
An “Amen” o’er the buried past, which I
A ghostly shade have dimly seen flit by.*

How England’s arts and institutions rose—
Themselves her misdirected rule’s worst foes—

* The modern Dryasdust will find a most interesting history of this venerable ruin in the “Church Review,” (Vol. VIII, No. 1,) from the pen of that accomplished and zealous antiquary, the Rev. John Collins McCabe, Rector of the “Ascension,” Baltimore.

Was his to tell, whose eloquence of old
Hath borne rapt senates on its tide of gold ;
Whose name a calm and stately radiance throws
Upon our history, like the sun's repose ;
Where, sinking slowly in a flood of light,
Serene as he is wonderfully bright !
The shut past, like that hardy plant which clings
Upon the cliffs, o'er which sweep condor's wings,
Has all its leaves unclosed beneath the spray,
Flung from his limpid eloquence to-day.

* * * * *

One other name ; but no ! my song is done :
As well might Persian, who adores the sun,
Think that, by hymns or solemn-chanted lays,
He gave new splendor to his bright god's rays,
As *I* aspire, in any song of mine,
To make that name in greater lustre shine.
Its fittest praise is on Virginia's brow,
As, kneeling down, to God she sends her vow—

That, as her great son left her, she will be ;
And live on proudly—free amid the free :
Or, finding that she may not thus remain,
Like SAMSON, grasp the pillars of the fane,
And leave all wreck, where erst in pride it rose,
Tomb for herself in common with her foes.



A POEM
PRONOUNCED BEFORE THE
PHI BETA KAPPA SOCIETY
AND
GRADUATING CLASSES
OF
WILLIAM AND MARY COLLEGE,

On the 4th of July, 1858.

"I am no believer in genius without labor; but I do believe that labor, judiciously and continually applied, becomes genius in itself."

SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON.

Address to the Associated Societies of the University of Edinburgh, 1854.



P O E M .

As toiling seaman, when he plies the oar,
Sits with his face toward the fading shore,
So I, to-day, my glances backward cast,
Stand with my vision turned upon the past.
But with this difference: when the seaman's boat
Leaves the fair prospect in its wake remote,
He still has hopes some future day to reach
His happy cottage on the spreading beach,
Left in the morning, when its bracing air
Lifted the masses of his careless hair.
But, save in fancy, I return no more
To gather shells on youth's delightful shore;
No more in speculative mood shall stand
To watch the breakers dancing on the sand;

No more shall launch my mimic boat, and thrill
To see its sails with morning's breezes fill;
No more; sad word! And yet, I never more
Shall place my foot upon that fading shore!
My bark in earnest ploughs life's spreading sea,
And I go back—but in my reverie!

That coast in sinking takes new charms, and seems
As 'twere encircled by a cloud of dreams;
Its purple hues show fairer through the spray,
Which the great deep flings up along my way.
Now the hoarse voices of the restless main
Have drowned the melody of many a strain,
Which manhood's ears shall never more salute
With dreamy tones of blended harp and lute.
Alas! youth's songs, which once in rapture rose,
Die as the gale of ocean 'round me blows!

But, though the swell of music's o'er, that strand
In fading slowly seems like fairy land;

There mem'ry's mirage paints the sharp outline
Of many a temple, rich in many a shrine,
Against the sky, which deepens in its glow
The nearer even comes, the farther off I go.

And here, to-day, after the flight of years,
Amid these scenes the past all re-appears:
This day, like some magician, brings me back
In vivid hues my own life's varied track.
Familiar faces start upon my view—
Imagined tones recall a chosen few:
The youthful student, with his eager eyes;
The learned jurist, bland as he was wise.
Where are they now? Where is each cherished
friend?

Is there no answer this sad pause to end?
Alas! indeed, the greater part have made
Their journey through the silent valley's shade!

Having thus spoken: it is fitting here,
Pouring libations on their general bier,

To wish that the survivors all may find
Serenest pleasure in each liberal mind.
But from these retrospections—sad array!—
Which come like mourners on this gala day—
Fitter by far for solitary hours
Than scene like this enriched by living flow'rs—
I turn aside; and, in the pause, might start
As Mem'ry's elbow leans upon Time's chart,
Which shows, alas! how soon all men must glide
Over meridians on life's ocean-tide—
Meridians showing how both youth and sage
Are sailing northward to the zone of age:
On to an atmosphere of gloom, I wist,
Where mariners are lost in melancholy mist!

But gayer thoughts, like spring-tide swallows, dart
Through youth's brave mind, and animate its
heart;
Your hopeful natures, your elated eyes,
See gold and crimson in the morning skies;

Empurpled tintings o'er life's sea descend,
And gorgeous hues in softened radiance blend;
You look with rapture o'er the untried main,
Which glows like picture touched by Claude Lorraine.

You gaze abroad—your hearts expand in smiles
To see in distance groups of clustering isles,
Where richest flora and majestic trees
Shed perfume on the dewy, morning breeze:
See radiant palaces with glittering walls
Seated 'mid vales, where many a fountain falls;
Where all seems full of happiness, and glows
In blended tints of violet and rose.

And through these islands your's you deem 'twill be
To sail enchanted on a summer sea;
Pause where you list, or spread your silken sail,
Wafted before some soft, propitious gale,
Toward fair scenes, while ever on the view
Rise other islands beautiful and new?

This sweet ideal archipelago,
Whose blooms seem ignorant of winter's snow,
You fondly dream will yet to you be known—
Its varied treasures all become your own?
But, ah! young friends, 'tis melancholy truth,
Which e'en the wisest have ignored in youth,
That on life's wave no youthful Genoese
Ever attains those distant, shining seas,
Though Hope, like the great Spanish Queen, doth
stand,
Its richest jewels royally in hand,
To give equipment to adventurous fleets:
Those isles have ever stood as smiling cheats,
And still remain—most beautiful deceits!

But you, to-day, see only where you gaze
Enchanted islands wrapped in purple haze:
Your youthful barks in tranquil waters glide,
Untossed, as yet, by life's tumultuous tide;
For you soft skies stretch smiling over-head,
As though all storms had from the ocean fled!

But spread your sails—laugh in the morning air—
Steer for those isles: They are no longer there!
All men cannot be like great Colon, nor
Find o'er the sea a happy Salvador;
Nor can they rival Cæsar, though we all
May but too often like the Roman fall,
Yet find in it no omen; grasp but sands
Where Hope had placed a sceptre in our hands!

Ah, yes! believe, for I have had such dreams,
That this fair scene is far from what it seems;
That shoals are hidden 'neath the dancing wave,
Which, smiling, canopies full many a grave;
That vexed Bermudas stand in sullen glooms,
Like ocean's monuments o'er ocean's tombs;
For proudest argosies have there gone down
With Fancy's ermine and Ambition's crown.

Knowing these things, I've taken for my theme—
No vague romance, no poet's floral dream—

No starry thesis woven by that tide
Where dreamers see ethereal dancers glide,
And breathe their rapture through sonorous shells,
Made vocal where the fabled fountain wells—
Knowing, especially, how Youth is prone
To turn its prow from reason's temperate zone,
I leave untouched full many a subject, which
My art might feel ambitious to enrich
With its best treatment; but aside I turn
To take a theme prosaic both and stern.

A theme like mine, I know, yields little scope
For stately metaphor, or brilliant trope:
'Tis Labor's value, which I but suggest,
Leaving the logic of your minds the rest;
For 'mid these scenes I've neither space nor
time
To grow elaborate in my humble rhyme—
But if I leave one fruitful thought behind,
One useful truth in any youthful mind,

Which may inspire new energy, and give
A just conception how a man should live,
'Twill leave no other praise for me to ask,
'Twill be rich payment for my pleasant task.
Leaving the sea, where I have been to-day,
Rhetorically, somewhat like Vernet,
I take another figure, which will do,
Though I confess 'tis not exactly new.

The future spreads before you, vast and grand,
Like some uncultivated table land:
On its broad acres tender tints of green
Lend soft attractions to the varied scene;
Woodlands and meadows, spreading meads and
slopes,
All blossom with imaginings and hopes.
But in those fields, ere you can reap the grain,
Long days must pass, and those not free from pain;
For all must follow close upon the plough,
And sweat must gather on each manly brow,

Before the treasures can be reaped, which stand
Wooing with gold the hardy reaper's hand.
For since the sin of disobedience, and
Forbidden fruit, brought death upon the land,
The earth has proved abundant with man's foes—
The summer's heat—the winter's chilly snows—
The desert's sand—the forest's tangled growth—
All say, starvation is the price of sloth.

Aye! these and thousand other forces blend,
With which all races in all climes contend.
Yet, what that primal sin for manhood earned,
Supremest Mercy to a blessing turned;
But you, now filled with youth's impetuous fire,
Here pause in doubt, and doubtingly inquire
Into this truth, which, though both grave and
wise,
Excites, full often, wonder and surprise.
But should this 'truth by any be attacked,
One illustration will attest the fact,

That Labor is a blessing—that it stands
A benefactor, smiling o'er those lands
Where most humanity has proved to be
Imbued with something of Divinity!

In Oriental fictions, you know well,
That there are tales of many a magic spell,
Which, in some fairy realms, give rarest bliss
And splendid opulence, unknown in this:
I recollect Aladdin's wondrous power
Once made the envy of a boyish hour.
But, now, I know his jewel-lighted caves
But the fit dwellings for a race of slaves—
Slaves to the passions, which, though velvet-
shod,
Crush from man's soul all that remains of God—
And leave him but a rude barbarian, though
His empire stretches from eternal snow
To where, upon Sahara's waste of sands,
The lordly lion of the desert stands.

Nay, never envy his voluptuous ease,
At last 'twould turn to horrible disease—
'Twould be a draught of Borgia wine; at first
Elate your hearts, then leave your lives accursed
With subtle poison, whose insidious flame
Would leave dead souls in every living frame.
The world would sail on through the sea of space
With ghastly, living skeletons, in place
Of the strong crew at work with head and heart,
As earth steers onward by Jehovah's chart;
For civil progress, it is known, but lives
In the results which steady labor gives;
And were all men Aladdins, blight would fall
On the broad world a mighty funeral pall:
The Age would pause, and with its broken staff
Write in the dust its dreary epitaph.
Would I had pow'r in fitting strain to raise
My verse, as fits the agency I praise!
Labor, in one sense, has the breath of hills—
The atmosphere of mountains; for it fills

The heart with independence, and the brain
With consciousness of strength to reap life's plain—
To climb its steep acclivities, and gaze,
With eyes unquailing, on the heaven's ablaze
With all God's burning witnesses, which glow
In silent scrutiny upon the world below.

But Indolence is seen a pallid Ruth—
A timid gleaner in the fields of youth—
A wretched gath'rer of the scattered grain
Left by the reapers, who have swept the plain;
But with no Böaz, standing by the while,
To watch its figure with approving smile.
No manly bosom to it homage yields—
No master woos it in life's harvest fields—
With drooping spirit and dejected eyes,
Save in despair, it never fronts the skies.

Had I the pow'r, I'd grave it on each mind—
Write it in letters which should strike the blind—

That labor is the only spell which can
E'er give success and happiness to man ;
Yet well I know this theory may seem,
To youthful thought, like some eccentric dream ;
But it is true : Experience will attest
That one who labors is more nearly blest
Than he who seeks the deadly poppy field,
In which his faculties at once must yield
To fatal sleep, which poisons mind and heart,
Too oft beyond the reach of human art :
That poppy field is Idleness—its blooms
Nod mournfully above unnumbered tombs,
Where high ambitions, like dead monarchs, lay—
Uncrownèd kings gone back to common clay
Of common minds, which ne'er, alas ! can give
A noble impulse breathing space to live !

And yet I know this thought repulsive seems
To youth, indulging in its florid dreams—
That Hope, the flatterer, makes a grand parade—
Spreads o'er the future many a gorgeous shade—

Fills Fancy's ears with trumpet notes, and starts
The blood in tumult through ambitious hearts—
Makes ready for the coronation—brings
A host of visions fit to follow kings;
But when the dreamer seeks to grasp his crown,
The royal bauble and the fool fall down:
Success is slain, like Duncan; yet the throne
Save in his fancy, ne'er becomes his own.
Too late he sees the column of man's march
Passing beneath the grand triumphal arch
Of human progress, where a mighty crowd
Forever pours beneath its sculptures proud.
And though no rich, emblazoned banners fling
Their silken volumes on the breeze's wing,
Although we hear no pealing bugle's wind
To animate the few who droop behind,
Still there is something in this march sublime
Which well may challenge all recorded time!

The legend written on those banners gleams
With one great word unknown in idle dreams:

That word is—Labor: you alone may hope
By it with time's vicissitudes to cope;
For 'mid the chariots in the race of life,
The scene is one of turmoil and of strife,
Where he, who'd win in the stern contest, must
Shrink neither from the struggle, nor the dust.
Who'd shout upon the stadium, when his face
Might shine in triumph leading in the race?
Who'd mingle with the multitude, and brawl,
When he might be the proudest of them all?
Who'd be a mere spectator, and look down
Upon life's games, when he might win the victor's
 laurel crown?

And here, within these consecrated shades,
These tranquil corridors and dim arcades,
You have, young friends, before your eager eyes
Presented, day by day, a splendid prize—
The noble learning of the storied past,
A treasure which, superb as it is vast,

Invites you to its grand, Pompeian store,
Which sage and tyro, young and old, explore—
Where 'neath the lava of past ages thrown,
By Labor, back, on each historic stone
You read the records of all vanished time—
Can any task than this be more sublime?
Indeed, it is both wonderful and grand
To hold the past as 'twere within your hand!

Each step you take in such great labor shows
Where on the walls some splendid fresco glows—
Where rich Mosaics of forgotten art
From the wide pavement in their beauty start—
Where you may in your musing mood proceed
With brilliant Sallust, or rich Diomede,
From the stern circus to the splendid feast—
Pause where the flame is lighted by Jove's
priest—

Study old Arts, Laws, Letters, Social State,
And see how man in ancient times was great.

In this poor figure I have partly shown
The wondrous treasures you may make your own—
A wealth more priceless than the wealth of kings—
A wealth which never to itself takes wings;
But still remains, though all else may depart,
Charm to the mind and solace to the heart!
And living in a country blest as ours,
Whose landscapes show no crumbling, feudal towers—

Where no hereditary nobles stand
Acknowledged rulers o'er a subject land—
Where all the honors of the school, or State,
Attend on him who is most truly great—
We should remember that 'tis labor's spell
By which the greatest can alone excel.
Here manhood's gold requires no guinea's stamp,
Won by some ancestor in court or camp;
For the old Roman's just conception finds
Ready response in all enlightened minds:
That if great deeds, done in remoter days,
Win for their doers eulogy and praise—

Win for their doers such abundant fame,
As gives nobility to all their name—
That surely those who do such in our time
Are full as great, in character sublime,
As though the mists, which gather o'er the past,
Had 'round their deeds fictitious glory cast.

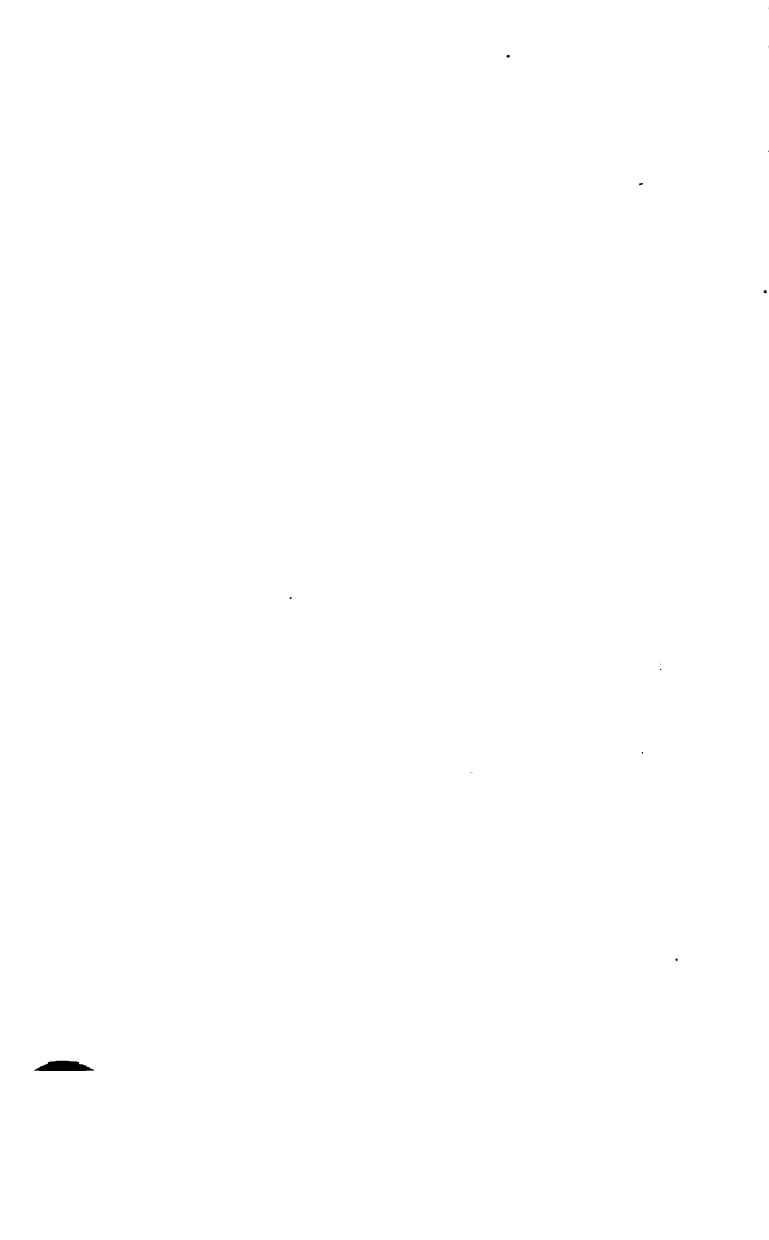
E'en those 'round whom the eagle genius wings
Its circling flight, proclaiming them as kings,
When, at the gates of life's great city, they
Press proudly down the throng-encumbered way—
E'en such as these must be, indeed, thrice mad,
Unless they deeds to the good omen add.
Yes, life is not made up of dreams, but acts—
Not visionary phantasies, but facts!
By deeds—not dreams—we solve the sum of
 life—
By deeds—not dreams—we conquer in the strife—
By deeds—not dreams—alone we act our parts
In camps or senates, schools or busy marts.

By deeds—not dreams—alone we mock decay,
Live when the form has mouldered into clay,
Leave epitaphs which Time can ne'er efface,
And fling our gauntlets in Oblivion's face.

But yet I knew, amid the toil and strife
Which make a battle typical of life,
That greatest banners oft are left in dust—
That the best swords are often bit by rust—
That few have e'er, like Jaffar, onward trod,
Or, fought like Caled, called the "Sword of
God;"

But, turning from the Oriental's age,
I take a thought from a familiar page,
Which well may answer what I would display
Before your minds for many a future day.
'Tis that, in life's Trafalgar-fight, your eyes
Should always turn where the brave motto flies—
Where "Duty" floats emblazoned from the mast,
A sign of victory in the storied past;

And symbol, in its sentiment sublime,
To nerve each manly bosom through all time.
Look up to it! Put forth your greatest might,
That you may stand as Nelsons in the fight;
Or, falling, fall like him—ne'er to depart
From the grand temple of a people's heart.
But Labor's sword must not be left to rust,
If you would leave posterity a bust.



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

MEMORIÆ SACRUM.

We sat beneath tall waving trees, that flung
Their heavy shadows o'er the dewy grass.
Over the waters, breaking at our feet,
Quivered the moon, and lighted solemnly
The scene before us.

He with whom I talked
Was in the noble vigor of his youth :
Tall, much beyond the standard, and well knit,
With a dark, Norman face, from which the breeze
Flung back his locks of ebon darkness, which

In rare luxuriance fell around his brow,
That, in its massive beauty, brought me up
Pictures by ancient masters; or the sharp
And perfect features carved by Grecian hands,
In days when Gods, in forms worthy of Gods,
Started from marble to bewitch the world.—
A brow so beautiful was his, that one
Might well conceive it always bound with dreams;
His eyes were luminous and full of gleams,
That made me think of waves, wherein I've seen
The moon-hued lightning breaking in the dark
With sudden flashes of phosphoric light:
His cheeks were bronze, his firm lips scarlet-hued.
The Roman's valor, the Assyrian's love
Of ease and pomp sat on his crimson lips,
Uneasy rulers on the self-same throne,
Spoiling the empire of the soul within:
Such was his face.

And so that summer night,
We sat beneath the shadow of the trees,

Our talk had been in fragments—broken thoughts
Expressed at intervals: and his were like
The fragments of some mighty work of art,
Found on the desert, stern and vast and grand,
And, oft to my perception, thick o'erwrit
With characters which I could scarce arrange
Into their proper meaning.

Aye! He was eloquent!
His thoughts went forth like Emperors, and all
His words arrayed themselves around them, like
Imperial Guards—so full of pomp were they!
Forth he began, beneath the shadowy trees,
A favorite theme of his, and oft discussed:
His disquisition was on social wrongs:
Subtle he was—subtle and keen and skilled:
Full of strange arguments—strong in debate—
And, with a sneer upon his curling lip,
Would point out how Man and Society,
In panoply of prejudice, make war
Against the teachings of Philosophy.

Opinions which I had been taught to hold
As full of pith and gravity, he took
As 'twere 'twixt thumb and finger of his wit—
Rubbed off their gloss, until they seemed to me,
All, as he said, varnished hypocrisies.
And, listening to his subtle speech that night,
I half-way said to him: that prejudice
And early education make our songs.

After long years, his subtle speech comes back,
Like to the memory of a moonlight walk
Through Paradise, guided by him who wrought,
With his most cunning eloquence of old,
The fall of Adam.

Yes, he was most wise!
Most wise for one so young! and strangely read
In books of quaint philosophy—although
His mind's strange alchemy could find some
Rich thought hidden in the basest thing,
Which he transmuted into golden words,

So that, in hearing him, I often thought
Upon the story of that Saint whose mouth
Was radiant with the Angel's blessed touch,
Which gave him superhuman eloquence;
And though he was thus gifted, yet—ah me!

Well: talking thus that night, for we were friends,
I laid my hand upon his upraised arm,
And, looking full into his burning eyes,
Asked of him if *he* had not wildly erred:
He made no answer, but returned my gaze,
Smiling I thought at my simplicity;
But still I urged it—still he only smiled—
A smile of pity when it strikes down scorn.

Still earnest with my theme, I bade him think
Of Auerbach's cellar, and that wassail night
Whole centuries ago: and then in phrase,
Better than that which cometh to me now,
I likened it—the necromancy which

Drew richest vintage from the rugged boards—
Unto the spell wherewith he'd bound himself—
The spell by which he drew from simplest things
Conceptions beautiful, as Faust drew wine
From the rude table; for this friend of mine
Was a true poet, though he seldom wrote:
The wealth, which might have royally endowed
Some noble Charity for coming time,
Was idly wasted—pearls dissolved in wine—
Great armies levied, but to lash the sea
Of awful mysteries and forbidden things,
And thus his wealth was wasted all away!

Still on my theme I hung, and pointed out,
Full eagerly, how Mephistopheles
Ordered the gimlet wherewith it was drawn.
When I had made an end, he slowly rose,
Beneath the shadow of those ancient trees,
Stretching their arms above him, like tall priests,
In benediction—and so strode away.

He left me there upon that moonlit night,
Amid a wilderness of summer blooms,
Which flung their fragrance on the balmy air :
Since then the damask rose has blossomed oft—
Has blossomed—faded and returned again.
But he who went his way that summer night,
Beneath the shadow of those stately trees,
Comes back to me—to earth—ah ! nevermore.
Whence came the arrow matters not. He fell.
Death crowned his helmet with the eagle's plume.

And he ? God wot ! He might have left a name
Proud as the proudest ; now an epitaph,
In English unexceptionable, tells
His name and age, and that at such a place,
All fairly cut, was born this friend of mine ;
And how in early manhood, much beloved,
He was struck down—struck down, alas ! before
He'd won his spurs in life's great battle field—
He fell obscurely in the common ranks—

His keen sword rusted in its splendid sheath.
God pardon him his faults! for faults he had;
But, oh! so blent with goodness, that the while
The lip of every theory of his
Curved with a sneer, each action smiled
With Christian charity.

Like Manfred, he had summoned to his aid
Forbidden ministers—but unlike his—
Of the earth, earthy, which did slowly clutch
Upon his lofty faculties, until
They summoned him from the lone tow'r of thought
And false philosophy, wherein he dwelt.
God pardon him! Amen.

A RECOLLECTION.

I remember, I remember, that in those departed
hours,

I garlanded, right merrily, a coronal of flowers—
Of rosy buds all gathered in a boy's fantastic
dream,

And buried, like Ophelia's, in her bridal with the
stream.

In those days I had bright visions, such as many
a dreamer hath,

And the future seemed before me like a rose-
begirded path,

Down which I longed to wander, while youth's
foot was strong and fleet,

For a tide of Orient odors stole around me faint
and sweet.

And there was one beside me, and I pointed with
my hand

Down the future's blooming vista, which, to me,
was fairy land,

And her laugh rang like a harp string, as we
looked along the way:

Sooth! I scarcely deemed that moment that we
two should part for aye!


But the vision soon departed—all such come to
sudden ends—

It departed; but, in fading, it has left us tender
friends;

And the past brings, with this memory, neither
sorrow nor delight—

'Twas a pretty lake we ruffled, like two swallows,
in our flight.

Soon I found my rosy garlands falling dead about
my brows—



There was end to all our dreaming—there was end
to all our vows—
And alone beside life's pathway, in that sultry
noon-tide's heat,
I sat me down in silence with the dust upon my
feet.

As I sat amid the ruins of my dreams around me
cast,
I, with hand that never faltered, sowed with salt
the gloomy past.
Then I rose up a new actor in the world's stu-
pendous play,
Soon to find a sweet oblivion to the trials of that
day.

For again there came a vision such as Prophet
never saw,
Such as Painter dream-enchanted may conceive,
but never draw—

Such it rose upon my vision, and I trembled with
delight,
As I watched it upward sweeping, as a comet
sweeps the night.

TO *****.

Ah! thy cheek is like a statue's,
 'Neath a crimson curtain's gloom,
When the pallid marble borrows
 All the rose's richest bloom;

For the warm blood flowing, glowing,
 Gives a red, transparent glow,
Like that which rosy sunsets
 Often leave upon the snow.

Then thy sweet lips, when half parted,
 Humming birds might well invite,
When in search of dew-damp rose buds,
 There to pause and on them 'light.

Oh! the coral is not redder,
That is hidden in the sea,
Than thy lips, 'round which soft dimples,
Like the waves, are breaking free.

And thy voice, so soft and melting,
Never, Lady, should be mute;
For its tones are all far sweeter
Than the echo of a lute.

Then thy smile it has strange magic—
Has a magic, Love, for me,
More than streams of dreamy moonlight,
As they fall upon the sea.

While thy hair in golden masses
Falls around thy snowy brow,
As I've seen in saintly pictures
When in homage all would bow—

As I've seen in saintly pictures
In some grand cathedral aisle,
With the brow all angel's beauty,
And the lip all woman's smile.

And thine eyes are very lovely,
Between violet and gray,
With a glance that seems to tell us
They were made alone to pray.

And thy young form is majestic,
Such as sometimes we behold,
As they started in their beauty,
From the sculptor hands of old.

Then, Lady, 'tis no marvel
That my heart should feel thy spell,
That I should not love thee wisely,
But, alas! should love too well.

HOW IT FELL CALM ON SUMMER NIGHT.

My Lady's rest was calm and deep:
She had been gazing at the moon;
And thus it chanced she fell asleep
One balmy night in June.

Freebooter winds stole richest smells
From roses bursting in the gloom,
And rifled, half-blown daffodils,
And lilies of perfume.

These dainty robbers of the South
Found "Beauty" sunk in deep repose,
And seized upon her crimson mouth,
Thinking her lips a rose.

The wooing winds made love full fast—
To rouse her up in vain they tried—
They kist and kist her, till, at last,
In ecstasy they died.

WRITTEN IN LITTLE MISS BIRDIE'S ALBUM.

Many sweet-singing poets have woven
In musical ballads and lays,
Vast numbers of tales about *Nixies*,
And Spirits, and beautiful Fays;—
They have told us sweet stories, these poets—
These weavers of laurel and bays—
And they bring with their spells of enchantment,
Their wonderful ballads and lays—
Vivid pictures of Elfin and Fairy
In the depths of the green forest's ways!

Ah! the Fairies are wonderful creatures!
And the poets entitled to praise—
To thanks for producing us pictures
Where Fancy may dreamily gaze,

And see all the Fairies by moonlight
 Engaged in their beautiful plays.
 And these Fairies they show us have ever
 Been busy, since earth's early days,
 In generous service, wherever
 Any pure heart God's teaching obeys.
 But the wicked? Ah! me; for the wicked
 They wrathfully kindle a blaze!
 Yes, they busily torture bad people,
 And fill them with fear and amaze!

Were it mine, I would gladly upsummon,
 By some spell in my poor verses' maze,
 A wonderful Fairy, all shadowed
 With Poesie's beautiful haze:
 If I could, I am sure she would flutter
 To the mansion where somebody stays,
 And give her best gifts to a maiden,
 Whose shadow these bright Autumn days
 May ever be seen when you wander
 Abroad, while the sun is ablaze!

But, though I can summon no Fairy
To fly to this sweetest of girls,
I still can remind her that mortals
Can always speak roses and pearls.
These roses all grow by the fountain
Which springs in the pure heart of youth—
And their wonderful leaves are all tinted
With the beautiful colors of Truth.
And the pearls, too, are found in this fountain,
I am sure that they fell from above—
They are fit for the crown of a Seraph,
For these gems are the jewels of Love:
Then gather your words where this fountain
Its crystalline eddy uncurls,
And thus, like a Fairy, dear Birdie,
You will always speak roses and pearls.

T O * * * * * .

Could the wish of a mere mortal
Compass that which is divine,
I would leave within this portal
Such a spell for thee and thine,
That no evil e'er should hover
O'er thy calm domestic shrine.

And as time flows onward—flowing
Through the mystic vale of years—
May the great eternal GIVER
Of all blessed things, deliver
Thee from storms upon Life's river,
Whose rain-dimples are of tears!

Fain I'd arch it with a sunbeam,
Reaching fair from side to side,
And the years, like stately galleys,
In its golden glow should glide,
Freighted all with good gifts given,
As the gifts we give a bride.

In thy field of larger labor,
I would crown each separate sheaf
With a garland of rare blossoms;
Not a stain of mortal grief
On a single fragrant petal—
On a single radiant leaf!

With thy MASTER's work before thee—
With His harvest-work in hand,
He will temper every noon-day—
He will send His breezes bland;
And thou'lt feel thy spirit lifted
In thy ministrations grand.

E'en earth's reaper in the evening,
When his labor all is done,
With a tranquil smile looks westward
To the large, bright setting sun;
How much nobler are thy functions
Than the work of such a one!

And how much beyond expression
Is the glory of that morn
Which will burst in splendor on thee
When thy second life is born—
When thy reaping-hook at even
Is laid down amid the corn!

Ponderous wheels may thunder by thee,
In the chariot race of life;
Richer men—so called—may pass thee
In the turmoil and the strife;
But amid the world's proud altars,
Every garland hides the knife.

Earthly things may press upon thee;
 Skies may hint of storms and frown;
Hues in life's great picture alter
 From the rose to dusky brown;
But look forward! In the future
 What a rare, effulgent crown!

And, although each shaft of sorrow
 From thy breast I would avert,
Still the arrows from His quiver
 Come to bless us, not to hurt;
Flowers sprang where blood had fallen
 On the mean prosaic dirt.

And that ancient heathen fable
 Has a moral, grave and wise,
Which, however fast we're running,
 Still is kept before our eyes:
'Tis, that blooms which spring from anguish
 Are the fittest for the skies!

AN ADDRESS,

SPOKEN AT THE OPENING OF THE NORFOLK THEATRE.

Fair patrons of the Muse whom we adore,
As yon gay curtain rises from the floor,
A mimic world starts up beneath your eyes,
Where Yorics jest, and Hamlets moralize;
Or, 'tis a volume where through every age,
The hand of Genius writes upon its page—
Writes deathless poems, anthems, hymns sublime,
Chanted in rapture by the lips of Time!
To open this grand volume, and rehearse
Each noble master's thought-emblazoned verse,
Belongs to us, who, in this rail-road age,
Are still found driving—business—on the stage.

Ours is the task grave lessons to impart,
Instruct the mind and purify the heart;
Here, on these boards, we picture forth the strife
Which makes the ocean typical of life;
Display its shoals where many a gallant sail
Has sadly stranded in some fitful gale.
Aye! we instruct; for since gay Congreve's time,
A change has passed across Dramatic rhyme!
Licentious wit no longer holds its sway—
Beaumont and Fletcher both have had their day!
Sad dogs they were, and sadder still the times
Which they embellished with pernicious rhymes.
Aye! they have gone whose genius lent a grace
To what enacted should entail disgrace;
And now we show no picture to offend—
The Drama stands fair Virtue's fastest friend!
As mother, when her graver lessons fail,
Conveys sound truth in some ingenious tale,
So does it first your careless ears engage,
And then instruct as Humorist or Sage.

Here gay Mercutio moves before your eyes,
Here Cæsar falls, and fair Ophelia dies—
Here smooth Iago, with infernal art,
Stirs up to frenzy dark Othello's heart—
Here Juliet loves, and Romeo dies in tears—
Here Richard rushes to the shock of spears—
Here fair Titania trips, and Ariel's song
In elfin music swells above the throng—
Here Falstaff struts—of "sack and sugar" fond—
Here artful Shylock calleth for his bond:
And here moves Portia, noblest of her kind,
Of gentle heart, and most angelic mind.

Here good Antonio bears his manly breast,
And Cawdor slaughters unsuspecting guest—
Here Jessica, 'neath Belmont's spreading trees,
Reads, with her lord, the planets' mysteries—
Here gallant Hotspur mounts his "crop-eared
roan,"
Leaving poor Kate to make a widow's moan—

Here moves bluff Harry, Woolsey by his side,—
Avarice, Revenge and Murder; Lust and Pride,
And Love and Valor; Goodness, Peace and Truth;
Each native feeling owned by age or youth—
Each passion hid within man's inner heart
Is here unveiled and made to play its part.

What impulse is there in the hearts of men
Which is not bared by Shakspeare's magic pen?
What play of his that leaveth not behind
Some wholesome lesson in the lightest mind?
Yet, not alone do we present the grand
And solemn pageants from his master hand;
But lighter lessons, springing from the age,
We also offer on our changeful stage;
Launching our shafts at "folly as she flies,"
And teaching men to grow both good and wise.

And yet I know that there are those who say
His majesty below's "cast" in each play.

If he is "cast" 'tis simply, then, as one
Who by the hungry law's at last undone,
Nonsuited at the bar of man's own heart—
No fiction this—by histrionic art!
And now to those who sigh and turn away
In holy horror from each noble play,
Filled with high sentiments of general love,
Here in defiance I now fling my glove,
And say, when Mirth and Pity have grown crimes,
That such as *they* may well reform the times.

A MIDSUMMER FANCY.

How fair this scene,
Lit by the moon!
And though the night is one of June,
Still, pallid looks yon widowed Queen;
And see! this tranquil, solemn hour,
O'erburdened by her woes,
She flingeth to the waves her dower,
In showers of liquid gold.
Mourning her lord—the sun—she goes,
And thinking on his crimson shroud,
Her yellow tresses shorn, she takes
The veil of yonder cloud:
In yonder mist-made convent now
She hides her melancholy brow.

And still the waves that took her gold,
 Laugh on the shore and dance,
And dancing teach a moral old—
 For these small waves that glance
Around, are types of that great sea
 Whose billows splash and roll
Oblivious to the treasures which
 Are flung them by some soul:
Riding serenely high above,
Rich in its opulence of love,
And flinging down great thoughts which time
Will only prove the more sublime.
But like these waves moved by the wind,
 Whole races sway at passion's breath,
And rush up with tumultuous roar,
And burst in spray upon the shore—
 The melancholy shore of Death.

CANZONET.

My love for thee, dear Lady,
 Broke on my manhood's prime,
A strain of harp-strings blended
 With some melodious rhyme;
And now 'tis all the music
 To which my heart keeps time.

And as I'm pressing onward
 To storm the future's breach,
I hear thy footsteps patter
 By my side, and count them each,

As I'd count the bars of melodies
Which seraphim might teach.

My love's not that wild feeling
That too often leaves us ruth,
As its fierce Vesuvius buries
Dream-built cities of our youth—
When the passion, which was lava,
Makes a sepulchre uncouth.
No. It is a deep devotion
To thy purity and truth!

And my love, beneath life's ocean,
Like the coral in the sea,
Buildeth fairy grotts and caverns,
That are filled with dreams of thee—
Where my heart's tides ever murmur
In a ceaseless melody.

And my thoughts are like the coral—
For, when I would make them known,

All my words, howe'er impassioned,
Seem to be transformed to stone—*
Coral snatched up from the ocean,
Where it has its life alone.

But, ah me! no human language
Can this love of mine disclose;
'Tis to me—what shall I call it,
This great love which greater grows?
'Tis the Alpine valley smiling
Where the glaciers lift their snows;
But I better far may call it,
In the strength of its repose,
My thrice-blesséd life's St. Michael,
Which all evil overthrows.
Round its calm, seraphic forehead,
What an aureola glows—

* Anterior to the publication of Darwin's *Voyages*, coral was regarded as a sub-marine plant, transformed by the action of air into stone.

Luminous with light celestial,
As it tramples down my foes!—
Tramples down the many passions—
Rebel passions which uprose,
Ere this grand St. Michael entered
In the strength of its repose.

C U B A .

Siempre Fielissima Isla de Cuba.

O'er thy purple hills, oh, Cuba !
Through thy valleys of romance,
All thy glorious dreams of freedom
Are but dreamt as in a trance.

Mountain pass and fruitful valley—
Mural town and spreading plain,
Show the footstep of the Spaniard,
In his burning lust for gain.

Since the caravel of Colon
Grated first upon thy strand,
Ev'ry thing about thee, Cuba,
Shows the iron Spanish hand.

Hear that crash of martial music?
From the plaza how it swells!
How it trembles with the meaning
Of the story that it tells!

Turn thy step up to Artares,—
There was done a deed of shame!
Helpless men were coldly butchered—
'Tis a part of Spanish fame.

Wander now down to the Punta,
Lay thy hand upon thy throat,—
Thou wilt see a Spanish emblem
In the dark and grim garrote.

In the Moro—in the market—
In the shadow—in the sun—
Thou wilt see the bearded Spaniard,
Where a gold piece may be won.

And they fatten on thee, Cuba!

Gay Soldado—cunning Priest:—
How these vultures flock and hover,
On thy tortured breast to feast,

Thou Prometheus of the ocean,
Bound down—not for what thou'st done—
But for fear thy social statue
Should start living in the sun!

And we give thee tears, oh Cuba!
And our prayers to God uplift,
That at last the flame celestial
May come down to thee—a *gift*!

A F R A G M E N T.

How gorgeous is the eve ! The setting sun
Kisses the Night upon her jewelled brow,
Until she blushes crimson.

Now the moon,
The pale, new moon, gleams trembling in the sky,
Like half a circle—half a broken ring—
Half of a golden ring left by the sun,
In his late parting with his love, the Eve,
A lover's token that he'll come again.

Over the water quivers now a light—
A light which trembles, till it seems to me
The billows gleam with little golden fish,

Rising to look upon a scene so fair;
Or that, like some proud Oriental queen,
The moon is flinging, as she treads the waves,
A wealth of gold to bridge the quiet sea,
That she may travel royally across.

Above, the sky is luminous with stars,
Which gleam like spear-heads in the camp of night,
O'er which one great white banner-cloud unfurls
Its splendid blazonry of pallid gold.

And now the breeze, the damp midsummer breeze,
Passes its fingers through my careless hair,
Until I thrill to think that she, perchance,
Unseen and disembodied hovers near;
For this is now the hour when we were wont
To watch the coming of the night, as those
Who watch the coming of familiar friend.—
Noiseless the footsteps of the darkness, yet
We *saw* them falling on the tranquil sea—
In dusky shadows on the purple sea.

And here, upon this self-same spot, full oft
We two would sit together, while the night
Stole o'er the waters;—sit while every sound
Died strangely out, until the absence of
All sound became itself a soothing voice,
Which spoke in answer to our throbbing hearts.
When Silence, thus placed on the Evening's lips
Its mystic finger, then the fair scene stood
As 'twere in reverie of voiceless prayer.
In such calm hours, it was our custom most
To sit together looking o'er the sea.

And she who sat beside me? She was fair,
So fair; I might have known, as her white hands
Strayed through my hair, that she was soon to
be—

What she is now—an angel!

Her large eyes
Shone with unquiet splendor, which, I said,
Was but the burning of her love for me—

Was but the light upon the altars of her heart
Lighting her dreamy, melancholy eyes.

At last it came ; like avalanche that falls
Upon a sleeping hamlet, so it fell,
Upon my heart and buried it in snow.
All the green valleys of my happy youth
Were choked with sudden, unexpected snow,
Which never thaws itself to tears, those strong
And bitter torrents which sweep griefs away,
Leaving but broken arches, where rich blooms
May grow and cluster as their tides dry up.

The snow of that calamity remains,
My life all frozen underneath its shroud.

EVENING.

See the crimson clouds of evening—
Lattice bars across the blue—
Where the moon in pallid beauty,
Like an angel, gazes through!

Over all the winding river,
By the fading sunset kist,
Slowly rises up the vapor,
In a cloud of ghostly mist,

While the eve is slowly turning
Its last grains of golden sand,
What a holy quiet hovers
Over all the drowsy land!

There is now the spell of silence—
Of a silence calm and deep—
Over all the placid water,
Where the blue mist seems asleep.

And the vessels, slowly gliding
Down the river to the bay,
Show on spreading sheets of canvas
Tints that change from red to gray.

All is quiet, save the murmur
Of the tide upon the bar:
See each little breaker playing
With the image of a star!

And 'tis thus that human creatures,
Bowed with age, or fresh in youth,
Give back brokenly the image
Of each grand, celestial truth.

Now the brooding silence deepens,
And the scene is one of rest,
While the wrecked day drifts down grandly
To be stranded in the west.

On yon rugged coast of cloud-land—
High above the village spire—
On its mighty, purple headlands,
And its crags all tipped with fire.

THE PENMAN'S RHYME.

Through this garret the keen winds hum,
Yet still I must sit and think;
For the bread of to-morrow must come
By my labor with pen and ink:
And, whether it rain or snow,
By my pen I must win my bread,
And whether I'm willing or no,
With aching or cloudy head,
I still must sit and write
By a handful of smould'ring coals,
Though the winds of the bitter night
Rush in through the windows' holes.

Ah! little ye think who read
The books which we penmen write,

How bitter it is, indeed,
To sit in the lonesome night—
From a feverish dream to start—
To work with a misty eye,
While the throbs of the city's heart
Grow still as the night glides by.
Alone to write; not one laden cart
To break the dream of the sleeping mart!

And then in the morning hours,
When the pale sun faintly smiles,
To think of the woodland flowers—
To see but the smoky tiles—
To feel, in the place of the balmy spring,
The chill of December's cold—
To hear the winds in the chimney sing—
Is a wretchedness untold!

And then o'er my work to stand,
Like a smith when his labor's done—

To see remaining under my hand
A shower of sparks? Not one!
And feel my forehead grow red with shame
To see thoughts cold which I fancied flame.
Yes, this is bitter! But day and night,
'Tis what men suffer, alas! who write!

Ah! sirs; in the books of mark,
Which stand on your dusty shelves,
There's never a tale so dark
As the lives of the men themselves
Who wrote them—I care not when—
Last month, or in days of old,
For the mass of those very men
Knew hunger, and want, and cold,
While their patient lives oozed out—
Oozed out at the pores of care:
For their readers, life's revel and rout—
For themselves, but a beggar's fare.
How many have gone to the grave-yard's mould,
From the simple lack of a piece of gold!

And yet there's a payment which
I know you will laugh to scorn—
Yellow metal but makes you rich—
Your fame is in Plenty's horn;
But, in truth, is it not sublime—
Aye! pause but a moment—think!
To launch on the mighty stream of Time
In stately prose or majestic rhyme—
By the magic of pen and ink—
Argosies that never shall strand,
God's sunlight on sail and spars;
To steer through an ocean grand,
As the sea of the silent stars?
And so I will work to-night—
Will sit so long as I can—
Will patiently sit and write,
And envy no richer man.

KS

